

**National Partnership for Environmental Priorities**  
Office of Solid Waste

**Geographic location or area of activity:** All 10 EPA Regions

**Description of activity:** The National Partnership for Environmental Priorities (NPEP) is a voluntary partnership to reduce potentially hazardous chemicals from waste streams that otherwise might be released into the environment. NPEP is a practical way to prevent pollution by identifying, implementing and sharing technical and administrative solutions that achieve common pollution prevention goals. The objective is to reduce or eliminate from commerce a set of 31 particularly persistent, bioaccumulative, and toxic chemicals called "Priority Chemicals."

The core of the NPEP partnership is the development of a relationship between partner organizations and EPA to identify product substitutions, process changes, and recycling opportunities that reduce or eliminate chemicals in products and wastes. Each NPEP partner is formally enrolled in the program and pledges a specific reduction in wastes by a certain date. Facility managers then document their achievements in a "success story" which is posted on the Agency's website. Cumulatively, these success stories show fundamental and sustained improvements in environmental protection and show why NPEP has adopted the slogan: "Better Environment, Better Neighbor, Better Business."

The partnership between the Okonite Company and NPEP is an example of the success of EPA collaborative partnership efforts. As a result of a joint marketing presentation between the Region 2 National Environmental Performance Track and NPEP programs, Okonite enrolled two of its facilities in NPEP. Okonite, a wire and utility cable manufacturer, committed to reduce the use of lead in its utility cabling by more than 102,000 pounds. As a partner, Okonite also educated NPEP staff on the types of organizations that use leaded cable. This information led NPEP recruiting staff to begin targeting lead reductions in the utility sector and resulted in the enrollment of a new NPEP partner. The early retirement of leaded cable, as well as requiring lead-free new product specifications, could result in millions of pounds of lead removed from wire and cables.

It is through such partnerships that NPEP is able to effectively and efficiently expand its network of partners and to produce positive environmental outcomes. To date, the NPEP partners have reduced or eliminated 3.6 million pounds of Priority Chemicals and 6.8 million pounds of other hazardous chemicals – a total of more than 10.4 million pounds, a truly impressive achievement.

**Interagency partners:** NPEP partners include the National Institutes of Health, Department of Defense facilities, and the U.S. Postal Service.

**Local partners:** NPEP partners include the California EPA, Bowling Green State University, and the Town of Blacksburg, VA.

**Activity URL:** [www.epa.gov/npep](http://www.epa.gov/npep)